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UNH Announces Housing Lottery for Fall 2001

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Editors and News Directors:

Following this press release is a series of questions and answers you may wish to use in your coverage. If you have other questions, the university spokesperson is Anthony Zizos, UNH assistant vice president for business affairs.

December 7, 2000

DURHAM, N.H. -- Effective for the Fall 2001 residence hall assignment process, the University of New Hampshire is beginning the process now to implement a housing lottery in order to keep overcrowding in the residence halls at a more reasonable level for the coming academic year.

University officials explain the lottery is necessary because they can foresee demand by upperclass students for housing on campus next year is growing -- in part because the off-campus housing market is unusually tight, and in part because the university is in the process of restoring enrollment to its mid-1990s level.

According to Candace Corvey, vice president for finance and administration, freshman classes of approximately 2,600 per year will gradually return UNH to the proper enrollments, given its scope of academic offerings.

"This past fall we opened the year with about 5,750 students living on campus," says Corvey. "We expect total demand for next year to be closer to 5,800, and the lottery will be used to reduce that number to approximately 5,600." Corvey adds that plans are well along for a new residence hall and some renovations of existing halls that will add 375 beds to the on-campus inventory beginning in academic year 2003-2004.

University will work with students to help them find housing

UNH Student Affairs has assigned additional funding to support a more aggressive effort to locate affordable off-campus housing for students. The effort will include contacting area landlords and rental agents; developing new listings; expanding the publicity for the existing lists; and providing additional hours of staff time to work with individual students seeking housing. Student affairs staff also will work with Wildcat Transit to develop additional bus routes from off campus sites, in accord with student demand.

Who is affected by the housing lottery

The lottery will affect students who will be juniors or seniors in Fall 2001 and who wish to continue living in the residence halls. Students presently living in Woodside or The Gables apartments are not included in the lottery. Students who will be considered sophomores in Fall 2001 will not be part of the lottery, as the university has pledged four consecutive semesters of housing to them.

"We realize that we cannot alleviate all of the overcrowded conditions in the halls because to do so would place many more students into the untenable position of having to find a place to live off campus. Hopefully this effort will strike the right balance between our desire not to overcrowd and our concern about the tight housing market off campus," says Leila Moore, vice president for student affairs.

Students now living in residence halls and who will be considered juniors or seniors in Fall 2001 soon will receive a letter explaining the lottery and notifying them of their randomly assigned lottery number. Notices will be sent to students at their Granite Square Station addresses. "By letting students know their lottery numbers now, those with lower numbers will be able to start looking for off campus housing right away when they still have a chance of finding accommodations," explains Barbara Paiton, UNH director of housing.

Paiton says that about 1,600 rising juniors and seniors now live in the halls and will receive lottery letters. In a typical year, she notes about 800 would actually want to return to campus. "Our current projections suggest that we will have to use the lottery to exclude about 200 housing applicants," she says.

The process

The lottery numbers assigned to students will be used during the regular housing sign-up process that takes place in the spring. The total number of students who

will be excluded will depend on the number of spaces available after spaces are reserved for new freshmen and applications are received from rising sophomores. The lower the lottery number, the greater the chance of being excluded from on-campus housing. Students who are excluded will be given priority for any vacancies that may occur in the residence halls, Woodside or The Gables, after new students are housed and until the first day of classes. After this date, all residence hall vacancies will be used to reduce the occupancy of existing built-up triples.

Other changes include:

- Effective Fall 2001, there will be a new pricing structure for double rooms in which three students are housed. The per student rate will be equal to the regular double room rate discounted by 33.3 percent.
- Students eligible for the lottery can be exempted if they volunteer to live in a built-up triple. Students with the lowest (worst) lottery numbers will have highest priority to select rooms that can be converted to built-up triples.
- The housing deposit for upperclass students has been increased to \$500.
- Rising sophomores may apply to live in a built-up triple to save money. These applications are not guaranteed and will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis as space is available.
- If necessary, floor lounges may be used to house four incoming freshmen. This arrangement has proven to be more comfortable than a built-up triple in which roommates have not been able to choose one another. In such instances, a regular room on the same floor may be converted to a small study lounge to restore study space to the floor.

Questions and Answers Regarding Housing 2001 and Lottery

Q. Why are we running a lottery?

A. The lottery is necessary because we foresee that the demand for housing in the residence halls will increase for next year beyond capacity.

Q. Who will be in the lottery pool?

A. All residence hall students who will be classified as a junior or senior in Fall 2001.

Q. Are undergraduate students now living in Gables or Woodside included in the lottery? If not, why not?

A. No. The undergraduate residence halls -- not the apartments -- are experiencing the overcrowding and excess demand.

Q. If I apply for housing in The Gables or Woodside and get offered an apartment space, can I change my mind and be eligible to live in the regular halls?

A. No.

Q. If I apply for housing in Woodside or The Gables and do not get an offer for an apartment space, am I still eligible to live in the regular halls?

A. You will need to submit an application for the residence halls. If you will be a junior or senior for fall 2001, you will be included in the lottery.

Q. What happens if I get lotteried out, but still want to be considered for housing in the regular halls if space becomes available?

A. You will be placed with other lotteried out students as the top priority on the waitlist.

Q. Can I be exempt from the lottery if I choose to sign up for a built-up triple?

A. Yes, as many as 190 rooms in upper class halls can be converted to built-up triples. The lower (worse) your lottery number, the higher priority you will have for one of those voluntary triples.

Q. How and when do I sign up to live in a built-up triple?

A. Students who volunteer to live in a built-up triple can apply as part of the normal housing application process in February. You need to have selected your roommates when you apply for a built-up triple.

Q. Will I be exempt from the lottery if I want to live in a designed triple instead of a built-up triple?

A. No.

Q. Will I be exempt from the lottery if I want to live in a special interest/theme house?

A. No.

Q. Is it possible for a group of four to sign up now for housing in a hall lounge?

A. No. The decision to use lounges will be made only after we know the number of incoming freshmen who want to live in the residence halls for fall 2001.

Q. When is the new residence hall opening? How does that affect lotteries for the future?

A. The new hall and the addition of a fourth floor to Alexander Hall are scheduled to open for Fall 2002. In addition, in fall 2002, Congreve Hall will be closed for one full year to totally renovate the building. For fall 2002, the new beds from both the new building and Alexander addition will provide a net increase of 94 beds. By Fall 2003, when Congreve is finished, the total number of new beds will be 375.

Q. What do I do if I believe I received a lottery number by mistake?

A. Please put your concern in writing and send your letter to the Housing Office at Pettee House. The staff will review your status and contact you with their decision.

Q. What if I get lotteried out of housing and really think I have a valid reason for remaining in on-campus housing?

A. There will be an appeal process that will allow you to submit your request in writing to the Housing Office. Each appeal will be reviewed and decided on a case-by-case basis. You will be notified in writing by the Housing Office after a decision is reached.

Q. Will you house students on an exchange program from another campus?

A. Yes. Exchange programs include an assurance of housing at the host institution. Our students receive the same courtesy when they participate in an exchange program.

Q. Will you house UNH students returning from a study abroad program?

A. Yes, since these students will not be living on campus at the time of the lottery and therefore

not able to look for off-campus housing.

Q. Is there any circumstance under which the lottery would be called off?

A. Although it is possible, it is unlikely that we have over-estimated our predictions on numbers of students wanting to move into the residence halls.

Q. What is being done to help students find off-campus housing?

A. We have added a 40-hour per week paid employee to help students. This person, who will be located in 122 MUB, will

- Locate new housing listings and post them on the web (address here)
- Work with Wildcat Transit to evaluate the need for more bus routes
- Expand the number of listings in Rochester, Somersworth, and Exeter as well as in Durham, Portsmouth, Dover and Newmarket in particular
- Assist individual students with their searches for off-campus housing

[Back to UNH News Bureau](#)